WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1893-TWENTY PAGES.



A BETHLEHEM FAMILY.

A PRACTICAL VIEW OF PALESTINE.

A Visit to the Stable Where Christ Was Born.

CHRISTMAS IN BETHLEHEM.



N THIS DAY, A DAY just before Christmas, I want you to take a trip with me to the birthplace of Christ, I visited it a few years ago, and the notes of my pencil and my camera lie before me. The sweet face of a Bethlehem Madonna looks up at me from my table as I write, and photographs of Beth-

their sheepskin coats, registered by my camera only a year or so ago, make me think of those famous shepherds who first saw the star the night be fore Christ came. They watch their flocks on the same plains today, and in coming to

Palestine is much the same now as it was nineteen hundred years ago. The greatness of its history has magnified its size, and it could lose it in one of the counties of Texas. You could ride across it in a few hours on a railroad train, and today a second-class ticket from Joppa to Jerusalem costs you only a dollar. Between the seacoast and the mountains lie the rich lands of the Philistines. They are the famed plains of Sharon, and they are twenty miles wide and sixty miles long. The mountains of Judea would be lost in the Alleghanies or the



Rockies, and the Mount of Olives is so small that you can go out of Jerusalem, walk past the Garden of Gethsemane and be at its top in an hour. Standing here you can led Syrian youth was playing among them, look clear across Palestine. On a bright though I did not note that he had the sling day you can see the thin, silvery Jordan of his mighty ancestor. It was not far tied as a string to the great tin pan of the Dead sea on your left, and the vast, sparkling Mediterranean away over the plains of Sharon on the right. King David made a bors by marrying out of his sphere.

The Girls of Bethlehem. great fuss about his all-day's trip from Jerusalem to the Jordan, but the distance is only fourteen miles, and the Sabbath day's Ruth. The Bethlehem girls are among the open into a sort of a court, and in these journey from the Holy City to Bethlehem is beauties of the east and you will find more in big figures. They looked upon everything concerning themselves or their people through the right end of the opera glass. and their imagery is truly oriental. The ture large population, and it is very doubtful whether Jerusaiem was a large city in comparison with the great capitals of today. It now contains just about 40,000 souls, and the walls around it inclose less than a half section of land. You could crowd the whole city on a good-sized farm, and Bethlehem covers hardly more than a garden patch.

A Look at Jerusalem.

Both towns lie in the hills of Judea, and they will show you in Jerusalem just where Herod lived when he got excited about the coming of Christ and messacred the innocents. I walked over the same floor upon which Pontius Pilate stood when he gave up the Lord to be crucified. The walls of Jerusalem are thirty-eight feet high. They would reach to the top of a four-story house, and they run around Jerusalem cut ting it out in the shape of a diamond. Outside of these walls the steep hills run down on every side and across the valleys formed by these you see other hills, and the whole country is rolling. The big diamond in-side the wall is filled with a mass of boxshaped limestone houses, built one on top the other and crowded into streets ich cut each other at all sorts of angles. The roofs of the houses are flat. There e no chimneys and no windows. Many their rooms look like vaulted caves, floored, walled and ceiled with stone, and ose which open on the street are of this aracter. The streets have no sidewalks and the shops are merely holes in the wall. The streets are very in the wall. The streets are winding, and in going through them you winding, and in going through them you going through long vaulted caves. The

"A Sabbath Day's Journey."

BETHLEHEM TODAY, ling country. Outside the walls of Jerusa-lem you find many new houses. They have grown up since the building of the railroad and the Holy City has had a suburban real estate boom. These houses are of lime-A Visit to Christ's Birthplace and Its stone. They have no gardens about them and the white walls and the white dusty roads as they glare in the winter sun are painful to the eye. About the gate you find camels with dark faced Bedouins upon them. They have guns with them and they scowl at you as you pass by. Here are ragged farmers on donkeys with their black and white blankets hanging from their necks down over their bodies and half cov-ering the animals they ride. Now you go by Russian pilgrims, who are on their way into Jerusalem to worship at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and here pass turbanned Mohammedans, who scowi at you. There are plenty of beggars. A bare fcoted Turk with a crate on his back yells.



Bethlehem from Jerusalem I drove right over the fields upon which they lay and saw the star.

The Judea of Today.

out Bachsheesh and behind him stand the Turkish soldiers with guns in their hands and with swords at their sides. It is a motley crowd and you are glad when you have made your way through it and out

in the country. Among the Shepherds,

My trip to Bethlehem was made in the olive groves, whose leaves shone like frost ed sliver under the bright sun of Palestine and the plains through which the road passed were covered with grass as green as that of old Ireland. These were the plains on which the shepherds lay when they saw the star, and there the shepherds graze their sheep today. I saw perhaps a dozen bearded men in sheepskin coats who were watch. ing their flocks on these Judean hil their eyes were kind, and their faces full of character.

In one place I saw a family of four, a husband and wife and two children, which might have represented the Holy Family, with the addition of John the Baptist. One child sat in the mother's arms, another squatted cross-legged on the ground, while the father lay on his elbow and looked curiously at me as I drove by. The faces of all were fine, and you will see nowhere more striking features than those of these natives

It is out in the country districts of Palestine that you realize that you are in the lands of the Scriptures. I saw a dozen old men during the journey whose patriarchal faces and long white beards reminded me of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and an old turbaned Syrian wearing a long beard who rode behind me on a donkey made me wonder if he was not a second Balaam, and why his long-eared beast did not open its mouth and speak. Away off at the back I was shown the site of the town of Mizpah, where the prophet anointed Saul as king when he was out hunting his father's asses, and the inn into which Christ turned to break bread when he conversed incognito with two of his apostles was shown to me. The site is now occupied by a Greek wine shop, with a billiard table as an accompaniment, and it is within a few miles of the spot where "David with his little stone the great Goliath slew." I passed this place in going to Bethlehem, and I find that there are plenty of stones there still, and a lusty, bare-headfrom this point that I rode through identical land which was owned by Boaz, the richest farmer of his day, when he fell

I don't wonder that Boaz fell in love with not more than six miles. The people dealt pretty girls in the hills of Judea than in the same amount of territory anywhere else the world over. A shipload of these Bethlehem maidens if they could be transported to the great northwest would capprobability is that Judea never had a very just as Ruth captured this great land owner. Boaz, and when they came back to Washington as Senators' wives they would be the belles of the capital. These Rethle



Judean Shepherds.

eyed. They have straight, well-rounded forms, which they clothe in long dresses of going through long vaulted caves. The town is so densely populated that one room often constitutes a house for a family and these narrow streets are packed with people of all descriptions. They are so narrow that no carriage can enter Jerusalem, and in going to Bethlehem I had to walk from my hotel through the city and out of David's gate before I could get a conveyhead they cover with a long shawl of linen embroidered with silk. Each girl wears her

dan women and their features are clean cut and refined. I have seen fair samples of the pretty girls of most of the countries of the world and the Bethlehem girls are the equals of any. They are as intelligent as they are pretty, and I found that those whom I traded with usually got the best of the hereau. There is have a seen and the seen a the bargain. There is little poverty in Bethlehem, and the girls whom I met were well dressed, for the orient, and they seem-

As you near Bethlehem you find the hills As you near Bethlehem you find the hills grow more ragged. Their sides are covered with stones, and you see that they were terraced into gardens in the days of the past. About a mile from Bethlehem I stopped for a while before the tomb of Racnel. It is a little square building, about the size of a smoke house, covered with a white dome, and it is situated in the midst of a Mohammedan cemetery. It is worshiped by Musselmen, Jews and Christians, and its walls are covered with the names of

Where Christ Was Born. I asked for the stable in which Christ lay in the manger. I felt sure of finding it, for in Palestine every spot is marked, and, though it is now nearly 2,000 years and, though it is now nearly 2,000 years since the events of Christ's life took place, the guides of Judea can show you every spot which His fingers touched and mark out every foot of land upon which His feet stood. I was told that it was at the western side of the town, and I found a great church built over it. Just opposite this church there was a saloon, and my turbaned driver spent his time in this while I visited the church. It is a great stone structure, ragged and old, with centuries of hard usage. It was built, it is said, 1,500 years ago by the Emperor Constantine. Its roof was once covered with lead, but the Turks stripped this off and made it into bullets when they captured it, and killed Christians with the product. The church has again passed into the hands of Christians, and the services were going on as I entered. I stopped for a moment and watched the Greek priests, who, in long black gowns, were chanting their service, while boys in bright-colored dresses swung incense lamps to and fro. There were, perhaps, 200 men and women standing at worship within the great hall, and the ceremonies were very impressive. Leaving this hall, I was taken down into the crypt of the church and thence to the stable where it is said Christ was born. I went since the events of Christ's life took place, of the church and thence to the stable where it is said Christ was born. I went of the church and thence to the stable where it is said Christ was born. I went down a winding staircase carrying a candle and at last found myself in a great cave about twelve feet wide and forty feet long, the ceiling of which was about ten feet high. This cave-like room was floored with marble. Thirty-two lamps burn day and night within it, and it has an altar at one end, under which is a silver star set into the marble pavement, where you find an inscription in Latin stating that on this spot the Virgin Mary gave birth to Christ. I was not surprised to find the stable a cave. I saw many such in Palestine, and a great part of the animals of the country today are stabled in caves. This stable, however, has been changed by the decorations of the church, and it is impossible to realize the real scene of Christ's birth while in it. I looked at the manger. It is made of marble, and it is said to be the identical manger in which he rested. This is, of course, doubtful, as is also the well at the other side of the crypt, where the holy water is said to have burst forth at this time for the use of the holy family. I looked down into this well. It is said that the star that guided the Magi fell into it and that it still shines down there in the water, but that it is only visible to the eye of the purest virgin. water, but that it is only visible to the eye

WRITTEN FOR THE EVENING STAR BY OLIVE RISLEY SEWARD.

This is a true story. It happened in a Washington family of brothers and sisters. Missy was a student in the High School where her brother John was a cadet; Ruth and Ned, Hugo and Dorothy were sprinkled through the various grades of the Frank-lin, Martin closing the ranks in the primary.

It happened Christmas eve. Missy and and its walls are covered with the names of travelers. A little further on you find David's well, and then go round a corner and come in sight of Bethlehem:

John were going to the houses of their dearest friends to give Christmas gifts and greetings face to face. They had made this merry-go-round every year since they today. dled beside their father. Now they were old enough to go by themselves alone.

The clear, white night seemed full of Christmas trees as they trudged across the park and clearer and whiter than any other starlight when they passed again into the broad avenue, so broad that walking on the bright side, where the star beams lay, the other side was shrouded in dark shadows. Missy had prepared a gift for each and all in the four houses they were going to, a gift that each and all would declare the thing they wanted most, for Missy has that loving nature that makes her know how to make others happy and how to be happy herself, though not always quite content, perhaps. There were now four baskets, packed high as much she and her brother could carry. "More than they ought to," John grumbled good naturedly, but when Missy saw the peace-breathing Christmas stars and heard the bells ring merrily through the still Christmas air her heart gathered into a great fullness and she sighed "I can give so little, while I wish a good gift to every one I love, and I love every one and every creature, too," and she fell to thinking of the place even dumb creatures had that first Christmas midnight, so long ago; of the sheep on the plain, of the cattle in the stable, at that blessed wayside inn, and began to hum, John joining:

"Cold on His cradle the dew drops are shining: Low lies His head, with the beasts of the stall." Missy knew well what gifts to provide for others, but never gave a hint of what she wished herself; "so provoking," Ruth said. "Tell your Christmas wish," her brothers and sisters had begged, all gathered in their mother's room after school.

"Tell your wish;" but Missy shook her curly head. "No, you must guess it," and they guessed and guessed, "a gold buckle;" "fan," "skates," something in a box," even "candy" Dorothy thought it might be, but, "No," said Missy, "you're all cold; my wish is not for ornaments, nor clothes, nor anything to eat.'

"Well, give us a hint, that's only fair, said Ned. "My wish," then said Missy, "is for some thing that must come, without asking or

"Then," said Dos, with an air of conviction, "It is a live baby, I know." "Or else a horse," put in Hugo, with

of the purest virgin.

There are a number of other chapels about the stable, each of which has its traditions, but the incense, the marble and equal solemnity.

stone, tail awag, and tongue a lolling, as pleased as Punch and proud as Judy, to have outdone them in cunning.

This was perplexing, especially as the creature showed no disposition to take himself out of their pathway. "Go home, good dog, go home, your master will be miserable," plead Missy, but Mr. Dog was not miserable. After circling round, his eyes eager and bright, his ears pulsing up and down with pleasure, he gamboled away again, out of sight and hearing.

And now, the goal of the evening was reached, that bright, sweet home, out nearly to the Boundary. Our two went in, took off their wraps, and had tea, for here a serious work was to be done. The decoration of

their wraps, and had tea, for here a serious work was to be done. The decoration of five Christmas trees, for ever so many children, whose parents Missy and John had promised to help.

They entered a large, square room, already dedicated to the Christmas celebration, carpeted in mossy green, except in the center, where there was a bank of snow, beautiful warm snow, that wouldn't melt

beautiful, warm snow, that wouldn't melt and in the midst a spreading Christmas tree. In each corner were other warm, dry and in the midst a spreading Christmas tree. In each corner were other warm, dry snowbanks and other sparkling fir trees, while in the spaces on the floor and around the room Christmas things of every sort were heaped and strewn in perfect stacks and stores—toys, games and trinkets, pictures, books, balloons—everything that can be thought of in shape of children's fun, including loads of oranges, sugar plums ginger snaps and lollipops—in fact, Santa Claus must have stopped there first, one might think, and left samples of everything in his store, including a statue of himself, so like that it needs no description, and copies of the reindeer like those in the Smithsonian Museum, and a white sleigh, made of staff, big enough to carry a load of children and toys, that whirred around on a cable track, with a bell and a bang. But I cannot tell the story this year if I describe everything in that room.

It is enough to say that Missy and John tolled with their friends until the place was turned into a complete Santa Claus' paradise. And now, the last taper and spangle fixed to the gay trees, the last festoon

dise. And now, the last taper and spangle fixed to the gay trees, the last festoon fastened and bundle tied, Missy began to think they might go home.

again. Missy and John knew this as soon as they breathed the keen, icy air and saw the frosty radiance of the waning stars, flushed by those rosy shafts soon to become the full, glorious sunshine of the one new day—the joy-crowned summit of the year.

Missy and John, too, though now relieved of his heavy burden, fell to lagging; their pace seemed to suit a third member of their company, who had come shivering from under the door step, and now crept humbly and unseen behind them all the way home.

Missy's hands were snug and warm in her muff, when John unlatched the door of their own house, and she was about enner mun, when John unlatched the door of their own house, and she was about entering when the cold touch of the night before nestled against her wrist and the white dog lay down at her feet. She stooped to look at him, when he lifted his head wistfully and licked her hand.

It was all hubbub within, for the children were used described to the control of the children were used described.

CHRISTMAS TREE

For Little Ruth and Esther at the White House.

TWILL BE A HAPPY DAY FOR THEM.

How the President's Family Have but on these red-letter days, such as Thanksgiving and Christmas, he makes one Made Their Preparations.

OLD SANTA AND HIS PACK.



first Christmas in the White House, and her first within the range of understanding. Last year she was too little to appreciate Time, indeed; Christmas eve was ended, and Christmas day dawned over the world this season her eyes are opening to the vast again. Missy and John knew this as soon resources of Santa Claus and his treasure why her world was so full of goodies, and resources of Santa Claus and his treasure

and will, this year, be somewhat of an un-It was all hubbub within, for the children were up and dressed, and it is a well known fact that seven full stockings, however funny their contents, are no joke in any family. In the midst of the excitement the dog stole in, made his way to Missy's side and looked up into her face. His eyes were brown and sweet as chocolate drops, and said plainly as words, "You're my Missy and I'm your dog."

Then rose a clamor of questions. "Whose dog?" "Where did he come from?"

The dog was a silver setter, white as spun snow, with soft, long ears; his coat like crimpled satin; his tail a very plume. The collar, though bearing no name, proved that

collar, though bearing no name, proved that he had had owners, perhaps friends, but a welt across his slender back showed where the lash had cut him the night before. He this year there have been mysterious whisthis year there have been mysterious whisperings when the babies were around, and solemn conferences when they were out of sight and sound, and one of the rooms in the upper part of the house has been guarded from Ruth's prying eyes as jealously as Blue Beard once protected his gory chamber. The odor of fresh pine boughs and the glitter of tinsel have been observed by those favored guests who have been admitted to these more sacred precincts of the house, and there has been much to re-mind one of Christmas in the average American home. But all these doings have not been spoken about, for the President and Mrs. Cleveland do not like to have the and Mrs. Cleveland do not like to have the affairs of their family printed at length, and so the fact that there is to be a glorious tree on the day of days has been known only to a few. Dolls that would make a child wild wild with delight, dolls that open and their ways dolls that talk in that persons dolls that the persons dolls the persons dolls that the persons dolls that the persons dolls the shut their eyes, dolls that talk in that pe-culiar patois that dolls have, dolls that will do for any day, and dolls that must be saved for state occasions—ah, such dolls as have been smuggled into the house between Ruth's winks! And sweetmeats by the pound, and other goodies in profusion, and toys upon toys, until the stores seem to have been fairly emptied of their treas-

It will be a glorious day, long to be remembered by the quaint little miss who enjoys such jolly romps in the lawn back of the mansion, and with whose face the good folks of Washington are beginning to be familiar as she is driven about with her maid. For the elders it will be much such a day as they used to spend in the White House before. There have been some very handsome presents purchased by Mrs. Cleveland herself, and she has sent away When the whole family gathered later to for others by good friends who have had receive their serious gifts Missy led in her the chance to visit New York during the month of December, Mrs. Lamont carried a number of commissions when she went over the last time. The President, too, has had several costly gifts purchased for his wife, but as he never goes out of the White House except upon state occasions, or to "Martin, Martin, how do you know? I pass to the train or to his country seat, was all alone," said his astonished sister. sonal shopping. This could hardly be ex-pected of the Chief Magistrate, who has been one of the busiest men of the country throughout the autumn with the gravest matters of state. So he has done his purchasing by proxy, and there are some pretty surprises tucked away here and there in his own hiding places.

The White House Christmas shopping has always to be done with the greatest and circumspection, for Washington is full of gossiping people whose ears are primed to catch the first whiff of intelligence from the Executive Mansion. Mrs. Cleveland does not venture out in her victoria alone very often, but usually has some one with her as she goes to the shops. During the former administration, when she was the mistress of the White House, she was accompanied by her mother, but nowadays she has not been favored by that lady's company. Mrs. Lamont, for whom she has great fondness, is often with her. She Shops in New York.

Yet even so accompanied, there is always a crowd whenever she appears, for she is well known by the Washingtonians, and it is with difficulty that she avoids becoming the center of a throng. This is the reason, largely, for the fact that most of the shop- ing slaughaered like the rest. ping is done in New York. There, owing to the vast crowds that assemble in the

shops at Christmas time, Mrs. Cleveland

can pass almost unnoticed, and she far pre-

fers this to being stared at and followed by women eager to see the cut of her gown, or to notice the style of her bonnet, or by men who are glad of the chance to tell some one else what a spiendid woman she is.

This year, on account of the arrival of Esther, Mrs. Cleveland has been unable to get away from the city. Her purchases, as has been mentioned, were made through friends. In Washington the White House goods form the basis of much chat in even the high social circles, and often the fact of what Mr. Cleveland or Mr. Harrison has bought for his wife's present is known abroad be-fore the President himself has realized what

"booms" or any other undue inflation of values. The lesson of the "boom" will never be lost to those who were engaged in it, but no amount of preaching will prevent the repetition elsewhere of this state of affairs. There are still many persons who believe themselves wiser than all the rest of mankind, and when a "boom" starts in some part of the country, as will probably be the case within the next one or two years, there will be found plenty to go into it with money and hopes, to come out only with experience and debts.

has been done. There is no lordly magnificence about these White House gifts for Christmas. The Clevelands are not wealthy, and their expenses are made to accord to their means. The President invests his savings from his salary and has an eye out for that inevitable day when there will be nothing in the political future for his acceptance. So there is not really a fact, and the Christmas presents are just what would be bought and given were Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland not the official occupants of the mansion. Some of given were Mr. and Mrs. Clevelan official occupants of the mansion. the presents that were given by Gen. Harrison to his wife were of the most domestic character, such as dainty bric-a-brac, hand-

has been done.

the giver. And then children are children after all, and Ruth is just as easy to please as any other little girl of two years might be, whether she lived in a two-story frame house or a marble palace

given to those first received.

TO ADVERTISERS.

The Morning at Church. It is customary for the President and his wife to attend divine service on Christmas,

and it is probable that this rule will be followed this year. Gen. Harrison walked to church nearly every Sunday during his term of office, and on extra occasions he attended with punctilious care, Mr. Cleveland does not go as regularly as his predecessor, of the congregation that fills the homely old church on 41-2 street, where Rev. Dr. Sunderland preaches.

There were some jolly Christmas times during the Harrison administration, when there were three children, at times, on duty as makers of merriant.

as makers of merriment. Little Benjamin, better known as "Baby McKee," was on all occasions the hero, with the lion's share of the gifts. Then there were two girls, Ben's sister, and Marthena Harrison, Russell's child. When all three were in the house at once there were lively times. Frequently their laughter and, it must be said, occursame sort of an occasion at the White House as at any other home in the country. But if, as during the present and the preceding administrations, there are children in the household, there is rather more of an event made of the heliday.

Ing.

There were also some happy days in the Yule tide when Gen. Grant was in the White House. Nellie Grant was allowed a great many childish privileges, and her Christmas times were always full of joy and happiness. The east room was often the scene of merry parties given by her, and children's feet dance over the floor that were trodden the night before, it may be, by distinguished men, and beautiful women, officers and diplomats, leaders in state and society.

Smiles as Well as Cares.

There are some bright spots in the life of a public man, after all. The office of President is not a happy place; it has many, many responsibilities and frequent bitter various members of the household with a suppressed eagerness that shows that the Cleveland family intend to make this first Christmas of the administration a day long to be remembered.

The presence of the little baby will lend an additional charm to the festivities. She, of course, is not within the range that her elder sister has secured in her aim of life, led to the disappointments. But the days come when there can just as easily be smiles and happy times as cares and the wrangles of state-craft, and nowadays, when there are two dear little girls in the great white place that hides so much from the world, the advent of Christmas is welcomed with more delight by the elders, it may be, than the youngsters. For the reflected happiness of the children means much to those who feel the weight of life as it has grown disappointments. But the days come when feel the weight of life as it has grown

feel the weight of life as it has grown to be.

So on Christmas day no one will ex-tempt to "see the President." That day is as sacred to his personal self as though he were the greatest of tyrants, who could make and break laws and customs at his pleasure. Ordinarily on Sundays there are few callers, but the most intimate of his official associates are even then admitted to his presence in some cases. But Christto his presence in some cases. But Christ-mas day is not only Mr. Cleveland's own, but the children's as well, and the rules are ironclad that there shall be no intrusion of public matters into the family circle that cannot but be broken by so many

obligations.

The family will spend the day in the privacy of the rooms in the second that are set apart for their own per use. The library and all the other decked with evergreens, and in the nurs-ery, which is on the north side of the cor-ridor that separates the floor into two parts,

"And on earth peace, good will toward

MARK TWAIN TO MISS CLEVELAND

Together They Exercise a Pull on the Administration in Behalf of a Consul.

From the Chicago Record. Mark Twain has a pull with the admini tration. That has been demonstrated. He has a bigger pull than Secretary Gresham. Josiah Quincy and the democratic delega-

tion of Illinois put together. Last summer, when Mr. Quincy was engaged in his herculean labors in the cause of reform, he offered a prominent German of Illinois a certain place in the consular service which had been and still is occupied by one of the most efficient men on the rolls of the government. The removal and appointment were made out with the concurrence of Secretary Gresham, and Mr. Quincy took them over to the White House for the President's approval. But he brought them back unsigned and with instructions to inform the consul in question that he might make his arrangements to stay at his po as Grover Cleveland was President of the United States.

The Secretary of State never knew the reason for the President's action, but it has since leaked out that it was due to a letter written by Mark Twain while he w Europe last summer. He had freq Europe last summer. He had frequently visited the place where this consul is stationed, and knew him very well. One day he called at the consulate and found his friend packing up his books and papers for shipment home. He had not been removed, but had received notice that his successor might be named any day. might be named any day. This suggested a discussion of the tenure of office in the consular service, and when Mark Twain reurned to his hotel he sat down and wrote letter to Baby Ruth Cleveland on the sub-

not ask the President any favors. It would be a violation of our creed, but there is no reason why I should not ask you to say to him that in all my travels throughout the world during the last twenty years I have made the acquaintance of a great many consuls, good, bad and indifferent, and I have never known a better one than Mr. So and So, who has just received notice that his place is wanted for some inexperience man, simply because he is a republican and the other fellow is a democrat."

he other fellow is a democrat."

Here followed a review of the record of the the consul in question, a description of the peculiar qualifications which fitted him for the place, and Mr. Twain's views as a mug-wung concerning the manner in which Assistant Secretary Quincy was carrying on the work of reform by turning out all the republicans in the service and filling their places with democrats, regardless of their efficiency or qualifications. In conclusion he asked Baby Ruth to use her influence with her father to stop that sort of thing,

The letter was posted, and in about thr weeks there came a reply written on the stationery of the Executive Mansion, in which Miss Ruth Cleveland presented her compliments to Mr. Twain and begged to say that she had communicated the con-tents of the letter to the President, who desired her to thank him for having brought

him that the gentleman of whom he wrote would be allowed to remain in office as long as he performed his duties as faithfully as he had done in the past.

From Puck.





the gaudy church decorations about them take you far away from the reality and make you think rather of the marble stables in which the Roman Emperor Callgula kept his golden-shod horses rather than the donkey and camel stable in which

How Christ's Birthplace Really Look-

today one can better learn just how the stable of Christ appeared. I visited one after leaving the bedizzened and over-decorated sanctuary under the church. The stable is a cave, the floor of which is of rough stone. It has a number of chambers, which chambers are donkeys, camels and horses. They eat out of stone boxes, and in front of em on the floor men and women lie sleeping on the stones. There is no bed clothing, except their blankets, and they squat upon the stones when they eat their meals ragged, dirty Bedouin has charge of the whole, and his rates are about five cents a day per animal. The manger of Christ was probably one of these hollowed-out stone boxes, and the Virgin Mary, in all probability, slept upon the stones, or the straw. Within one of these stables I saw a Bedouin woman with a sleeping baby on her knee. She had just been feeding her child and one breast peeped out between the folds of her coarse rough gown. Her head was bound with a gaily colored shawl. There were rings on her fingers, bracelets upon her fair round arm, and a gold ring in her nose. Her face was, however, as sweet as that of any Madonna I have ever seen upon canvas, and her baby, just out of its swaddling clothes, looked as pure and innocent as the most famous representation of Christ. It was a scene for a painter.

Christmas in Bethlehem.

Christmas is always a great day in Bethlehem, and the coming Christmas will be celebrated in its usual splendor. Thousands of people go from Jerusalem, and while you are reading this letter, the priests are preparing for the service of Christmas night. There will be sermons in the churches, beginning at 10 o'clock, and then in a procession the priests and the monks will march down the winding stairs into the crypt and visit the grotto of the nativity. They will carry with them a waxen image of a little child, which they will place in the manger, and as they do so they will chant the story of the nativity. This child will be dressed in the finest of lace and it will rest in the manger on rose-colored cushions of slik embroidered with gold. During the service the patriarch of Jerusalem will go through the ceremony of taking up and laying do the child to correspond with the words of the chant, and the service will last for sevchild to correspond with the words of eral hours. On Christmas night all Bethle than any other town in the orient, and its people are proud of the fact that Christ was born within their wails. FRANK G. CARPENTER.

bit warm, and now I must go to my Latin."
"I dare you to shout your wish to Santa Claus, up the chimney, Missy, like we all did," said roguish Martin, the pet of the When the whole family gathered later to Franklin primary.

Well, scamper away, and I will," ar swered his sister, and as they trooped out, Missy, left alone, in the cosy Washington From the real stables of the Bethlehem of | chimney corner, did truly tell her wish to Santa Claus.

And now Christmas eve was come, and Missy's own wish was forgotten in loving thoughts for others. She and John turned off the avenue in a quiet street, where lived three little friends, and were hurrying through the gateway to pull the bell and shout, "Merry Christmas to all," when suddenly a quaking throb at Missy's heart and a sob in her throat stopped the greet-ing. The children had heard the sharp swish of a lash, the thud of a kick and a dog's cry of pain. How discordantly the cruel sounds tore through the starlight stillness. Some figures cowered darkly against the opposite wall. "Worse than brutes," muttered John, urging his sister forward. They left the basket and went their way. "Poor fellow, good dog," Missy whispered, wiping a tear from her cheek. Repassing the gateway into the street Missy fancied the soft pattering sound of little padded toes on the icy pavement, and presently felt a warm breath, then a cold something, against her wrist, and there was a dog, trotting confidingly by her side. "Get out," cried John, firmly. "Now, Missy, we can't stop to speak to every stray dog and cat we meet tonight," he added, with a brother's authority. "He's only saying 'How do you do?" " an-

swered Missy, meekly, quite used to such admonitions from John The stray dog passed "to heel" at the word, and was lost in the frosty darkness. Two muffled figures also hurried out of sight, blowing a low, shrill whistle. Missy and John had much to do, and now stopped before a great house, where only one boy lived, but he was a dear fellow, and

his gifts lightened the load perceptibly. It was nearing midnight, a weird time for children to be abroad, on Christmas eve. They went up 19th street, and when nearing Dupont Circle a shimmering white shot past them into the open park. A dog again, now jumping madly in the apparent joy of new gained liberty; he made our two the center of his caressing circles, returning again and again as they crossed the park.
"Where can he have come from?" asked
Missy, with concern. John noticed that the dog had a collar, and said he must belong near by. "Go home," he added, with stern emphasis, and the white dog made

small house in a dark narrow alley. The biggest basket went in here and stopped. There was now but one place left, and their shortest way led through the dark alley. Who should appear as if to guide alley. Who should appear as if to guide them near the end but the white dog, more composed than in the park, but sweeping his tail confidently still. "This will never do," sald John, "he must be made to go home." The dog bounded blithely forward, and "now's our chance to lose him." sald John. "Dash across this vacant lot and through the alley on the other side." Off they darted, thinking themselves rid of their persistent follower, and when safe in "A Sabbath Day's Journey."

The ride from Jerusalem to Bethlehem dower on her person in the shape of a necklar be made in less than an hour. It is one of the most interesting journeys of the world, and it is through a most interest.

The ride from Jerusalem to Bethlehem dower on her person in the shape of a necklar of coins and the forehead of each maiden is decorated with a crown of coins, some of which are silver and others gold. They do not hide their faces like the Mohamme-laged to parry the blow."

In Training.

Some furniture, beautiful gowns and small str; and a dish fit for a king!"

Watter (surprised)—why, the some furniture, beautiful gowns and small str; and a dish fit for a king!"

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We hampshire avenue again, when, lo and behold! there he was waiting on the curb-however high or low the social station of kicking at."

Their next stopping place was at a very

new friend, gay and smiling now, after a good breakfast and a warm snooze.
"What have we here?" asked the parents.

"Missy's Christmas wish," shouted roguish Martin, "She told Santa Claus to send her a lost dog, and her wish has come true "I heard you ask him through the latrobe But how did Santa Claus know, unless he, too, hangs round the latrobe register cold winter days in Washington?

RISE AND FALL OF BOOM TOWNS.

Promoters and Investors Invite Failure by Disregarding Ordinary Business Rules. There is a logical sequence in the rise and

fall of a "boom" town which, while interesting to watch from an entirely disinterested standpoint, has brought disaster to many a would-be speculator who laid down his money, earned and saved in years of hard work, with the hope of being able to make enough in one or two transactions to give him a competence for life. The secret of the failure of "boom" towns, according to the Engineering Magazine, lies in the fact that the promoters and investors dis-counted the future while deliberately clos-ing their eyes to the present. They disre-gard the most common rules of business with a persistence and blind obstinacy truly marvelous. Never stopping to reason, they plunged into a sea strewn with half-covered reefs of financial ruin and allowed the wind about at will, and when they finally struck themselves, their greed or their blind impetuosity, but the town, its overestima resources and everything else which failed to meet their hopes, forgetting that the facts were before them all the time. It is safe to assert that ninety per cent of the towns "boomed" in the southern states, which are now failures, would now be in a healthy and prosperous condition had they been started and carried on in the manner usual in business enterprises. A movement for the better started some time ago, but it has been slow, very quiet and very earnest. This movement is general and is the which will soon be beyond the reach of "booms" or any other undue inflation of "booms" or any other undue inflation of values. The lesson of the "boom" will never be lost to those who were engaged in

"Well, Uncle Silas, your boy is home